

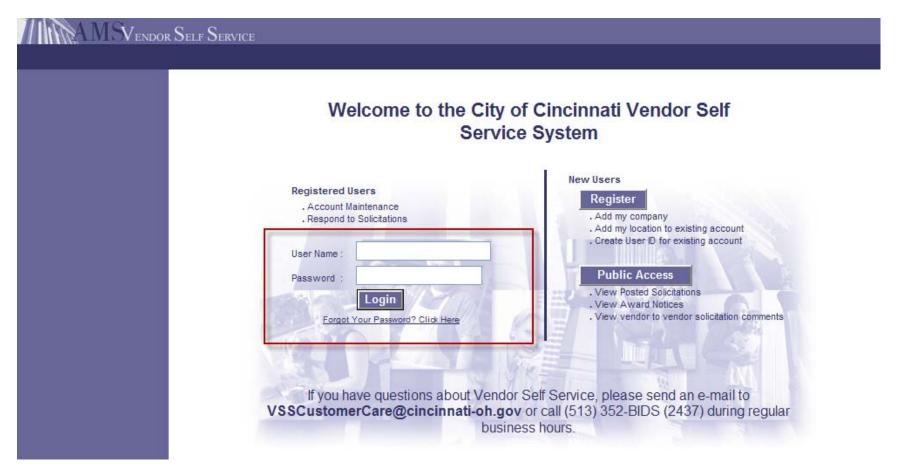
## VENDOR SELF SERVICE ONLINE BIDDING USER MANUAL

### **Table of Contents**

Logging on to Vendor Self Service	3
Searching for Solicitations	4
Solicitation Details	7
Entering a Solicitation Response	8
Step 1: Response Summary	8
Cash Discounts for Prompt Pay	10
Step 2: Commodity Response	11
Attachments	13
Step 3: Criteria Responses	16
Submitting a Response	18
Saving your Progress	18
Tracking Your Bids	21
Response Status	22
Status	22
Maintaining Your Account	23
Making Connections	25

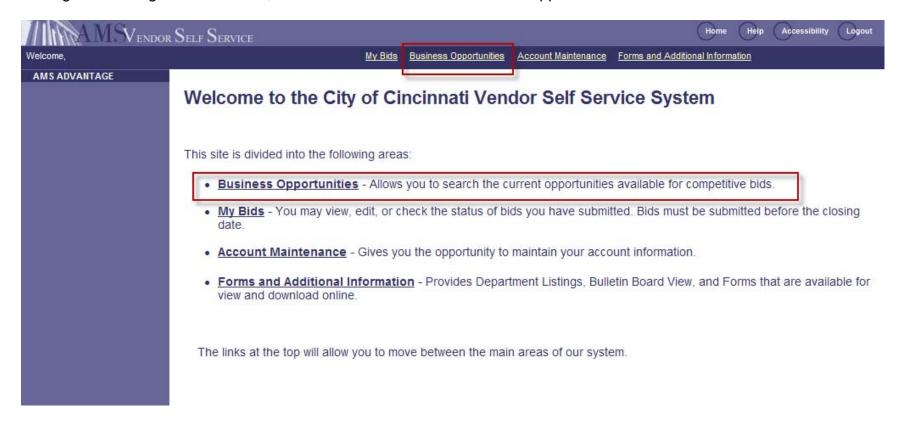
#### Logging on to Vendor Self Service

To begin using Vendor Self Service, you must be registered as a vendor with the City of Cincinnati. New users should begin by clicking the "Register" button on the Log In screen at <a href="http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/vss/">http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/vss/</a>. Once your firm has registered as a vendor, you may log on using the User Name and Password provided to you after registration as shown in the image below.

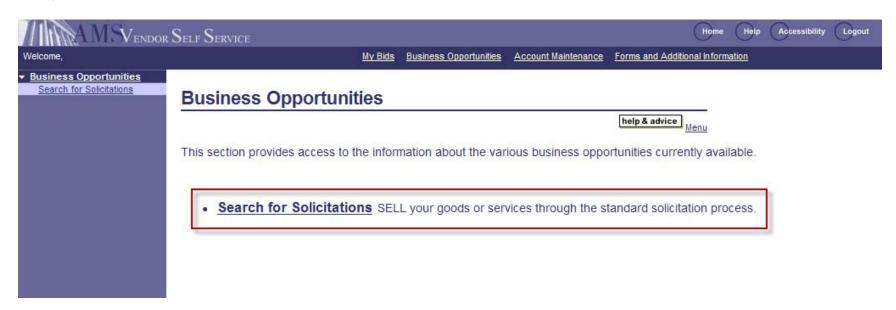


#### **Searching for Solicitations**

To begin searching for solicitations, click on either of the two "Business Opportunities" links shown in the red boxes below.



Next, click on the "Search for Solicitations" link.



Once you have clicked the "Search for Solicitations" link, the VSS site will automatically show you a list of all of the solicitations that are currently available to be bid on. This list of "Open" solicitations will be updated each day with any new bid opportunities that have been made available.

To view solicitations whose due dates have already passed, select the "Status" drop down box and choose "Closed." You can also choose to view only cancelled solicitations or to see all solicitations from this drop down menu.

To search for a specific solicitation, enter your search criteria in the blank boxes and click on the "Browse" tab to bring back the search results.

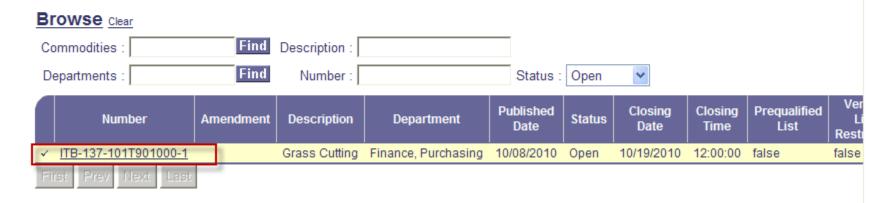
When you have found a solicitation that you are interested in reading more about, or submitting a bid for, just click on the solicitation number as shown in the box below.

#### Search for Solicitations

help & advice

Search through our current postings of Standard Solicitations. Sell your goods and services through a standard solicitation process, click the **Browse** link to execute your search or hit Enter.

Wildcard (\*) searches are allowed. (e.g. A search of Description using 'Computer\*' finds all Solicitations whose description begins with the word 'Computer'. However, a search of Description using '\*computer\*' would find all Solicitations with the word 'computer' anywhere in the description.)



#### Solicitation Details

Clicking on the solicitation number will allow you to view the solicitation details. This screen gives general information including the solicitation description and the closing date. If a solicitation has attachments, they can be viewed by selecting the "Attachments" link as shown below. Bidders can also submit questions about the solicitation through this page by selecting the "Questions and Answers" link, or see all questions and answers that have been submitted by other bidders. When you are ready to submit a bid, click "Create Response" as shown below.

#### Solicitation Details View

help & advice

Please print this page for future reference using the browser print command.

Questions and Answers | Bulletin Board | Pre-Qualified Vendors |
Notice of Award | Public Bid Reading | Auction Bids | Amendment History
Create Response

#### Solicitation 101T901000

Solicitation: 101T901000

Solicitation Type: Invitation to Bid Description: Grass Cutting

Requesting Office: Central Purchasing Issuing Office: Central Purchasing

Mail Responses To:

Deanna L. Brown, Interim Fin Mgr/City Purchasing Agent

Purchasing Division 2 Centennial Plz Ste 234 805 Central Avenue Cincinnati.OH 45202-1947 Status: Open

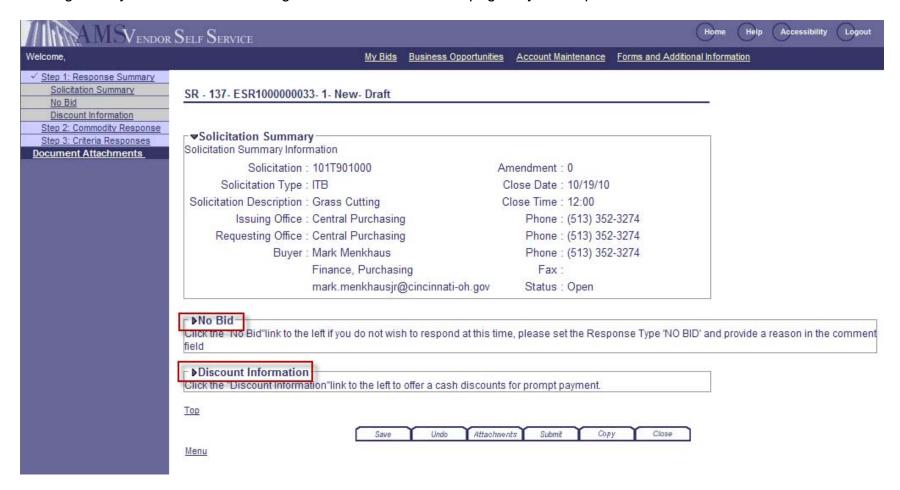
**Attachments** 

Issued Date: 10/8/2010 Closing Date: 10/19/2010 Closing Time: 12:00 Time Left: 1 Day, 1 Hours Phone: (513) 352-3274 Phone: (513) 352-3274

Online Responses Prohibited: No

#### **Entering a Solicitation Response**

Bidding is easy with the online bidding feature in VSS. The first page of your response will look like this:



#### Step 1: Response Summary

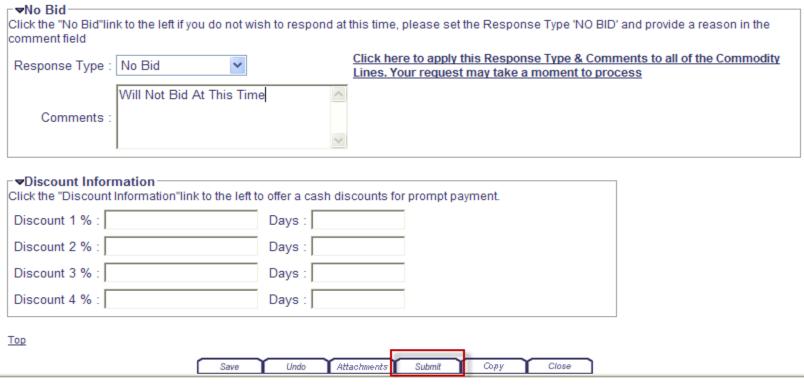
Notice in the upper left corner that you are beginning on "Step 1: Response Summary." You can return to this page at any time by clicking this link to Step 1.

Begin entering your response by clicking on the "No Bid" box as shown above to expand the section and see your options.

If you are choosing to submit a "No Bid" response to the whole solicitation, find the "Response Type" field and click on the drop down box. Choose the "No Bid" selection and enter any comments in the blank box below. Next, click on the link to the right to apply the "No Bid" response to the whole solicitation.



Now you can submit your response by clicking "Submit" at the bottom of the page.



Page 9

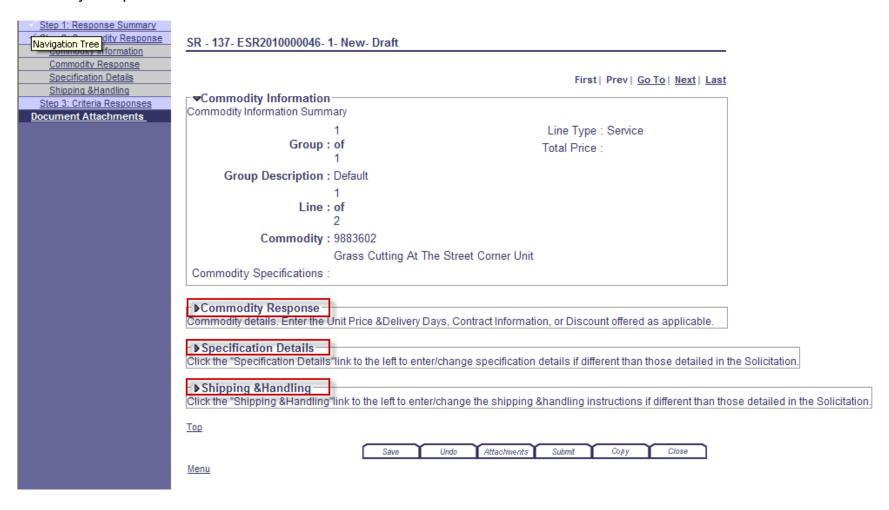
If you are going to submit a bid for this solicitation, simply leave the "Response Type" as "Bid" and continue to step 2.



#### Step 2: Commodity Response

The "Commodity Response" page is where you will enter pricing information for your bid. Some bids may have only one line, while others will have multiple lines for pricing. Each commodity line represents one price being quoted on the bid. Each line will require a response in order for your bid to be successfully submitted. You will view one line at a time, beginning with Group1, Line1. In this example below, the first line is for "Grass Cutting at the Street Corner Unit."

Begin by clicking on the "Commodity Response," "Specification Details," and "Shipping & Handling" boxes to expand them and see your options.



The "Commodity Response" box is shown in the example below. The "Response Type" will automatically show up as "Bid." If you are choosing not to bid on a particular line, change the "Response Type" to "No Bid" and enter any comments.

Enter your unit price for the line in the "Contract Amount" field and any comments in the box to the right. The contract amount is the unit price of the items requested.

Do not enter a zero in the contract amount box if you intend to submit a "No Bid" response to the line. Zeroes will be interpreted as free of charge.

Note: Some bids may require that a bidder enters a value for every item in order to be considered for award. It will be the responsibility of the bidder to read the terms of the bid and respond appropriately.



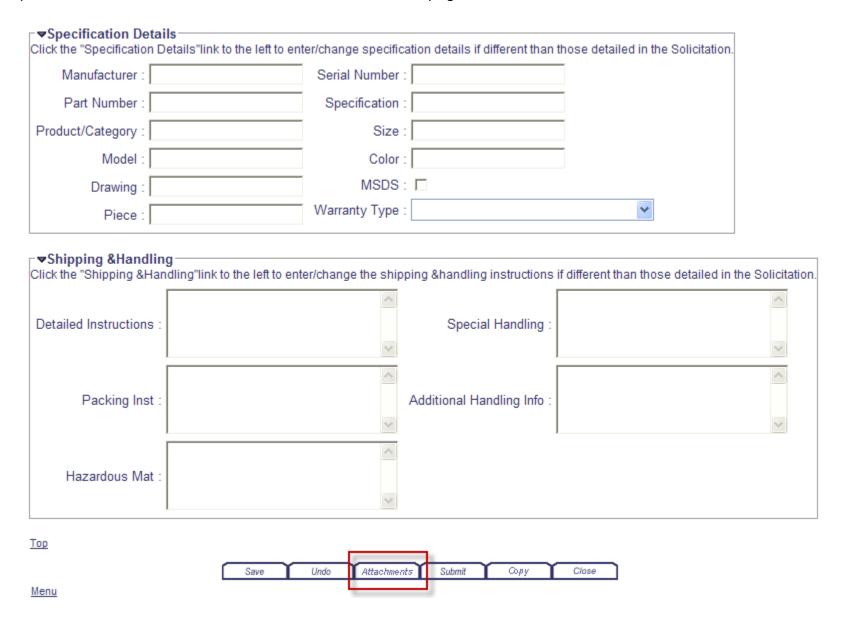
For the boxes described below, please refer to the image on the next page.

The "Specification Details" box can be used to give additional details about the items you would be supplying. Some bids may require that you furnish the manufacturer's name or other detailed information about the products you are supplying to the City of Cincinnati. If the fields in the "Specification Details" box do not apply to the solicitation you are bidding on, leave them blank.

The last box on the "Commodity Response" page is the "Shipping & Handling" box. You can specify shipping details on each commodity line if the shipping method will differ from the specifications provided by the City of Cincinnati. If the fields in the "Shipping & Handling" box do not apply to the solicitation you are bidding on, leave them blank.

#### **Attachments**

Each commodity line will also allow you to submit electronic attachments. If you choose to attach an item description or photo, click on the "Attachments" link at the bottom of the page.



Once you have entered the attachments screen, click "Upload" to open a browse window for selecting the files you are attaching. Click "Return to Document" when you are done uploading files.

Note: You may get an error message if you have attempted to load an attachment that exceeds the threshold of 4MB per attachment. If you encounter this problem, try either breaking up a single file that exceeds the threshold into multiple attachments, or save the file in a format that will compress and reduce the size (e.g. zip or rar).



When you have finished entering information in the boxes and uploading attachments for a commodity line, click the "Next" button in the upper right corner to move on to the next line. If the "Next" button is not underlined, then there are no more "Commodity Response" lines to fill out and you should continue to step three.

#### SR - 137- ESR2010000046- 1- New- Draft



Click the link for step three in the upper left corner of the screen when all of the "Commodity Response" lines in step two are entered.

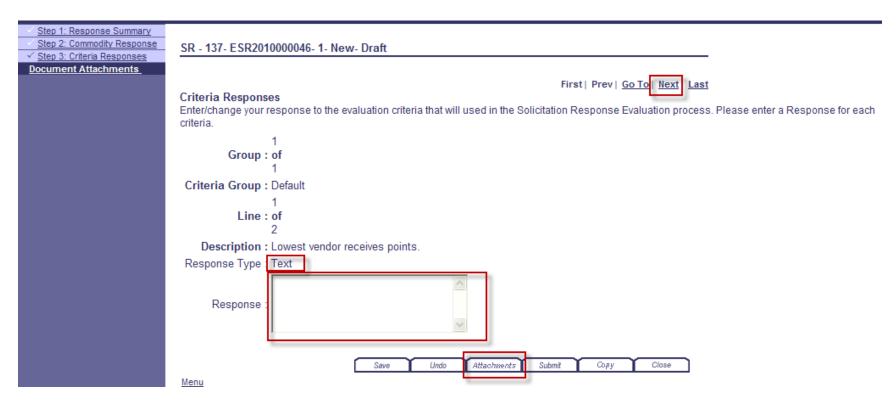


#### Step 3: Criteria Responses

The last step of the solicitation response is to answer any questions in the "Criteria Responses" section. This is the criteria that will be used in determining which of the bids received s the lowest and best. You will begin on Group 1, Line 1 and continue through each line until all criteria have been addressed.

In this example below, the description says "Lowest vendor receives points" and the response type says "Text." You will need to enter a text response in the box to acknowledge that the lowest vendor will receive the most points for the pricing criteria. Leaving the "Response" field blank will cause errors when you try to submit your bid.

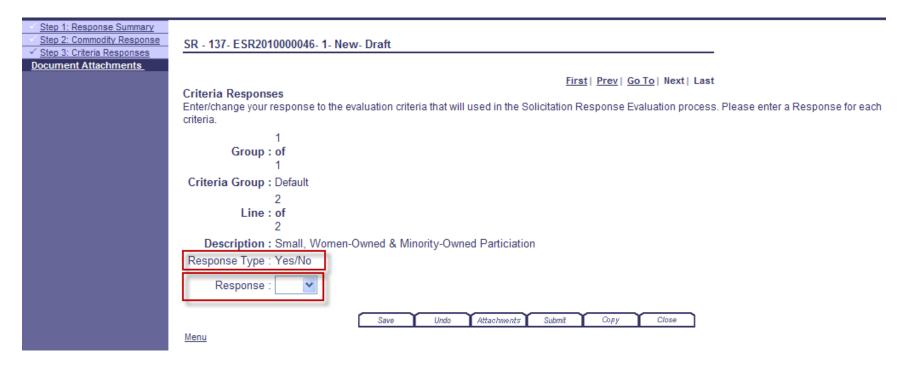
Just as in step two, you have the option of adding attachments to any criteria line by clicking "Attachments" at the bottom of the screen.



When the response has been entered, click on "Next" in the upper right corner to proceed to the next criteria.

Note: Leaving Criteria Responses blank may result in the rejection of your bid even if you submit your response successfully. Please make sure Criteria Responses in step 3 are all responded to <u>before</u> submitting your bid.

Some criteria responses, as in the example below, will have a multiple choice response type. To respond, simply click the drop down box next to "Response" and choose your response. Leaving the "Response" field blank will cause errors when you try to submit your bid.



When the response has been entered, click on "Next" in the upper right corner to proceed to the next criteria. If the "Next" button is not underlined, then there are no more "Criteria Response" lines to fill out and you can submit your bid.

#### Saving Your Progress

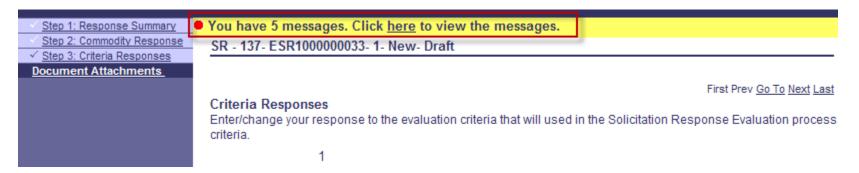
If you need to stop in the middle of filling out your bid, simply click the "Save" link at the bottom of the page and log out.

#### Submitting a Response

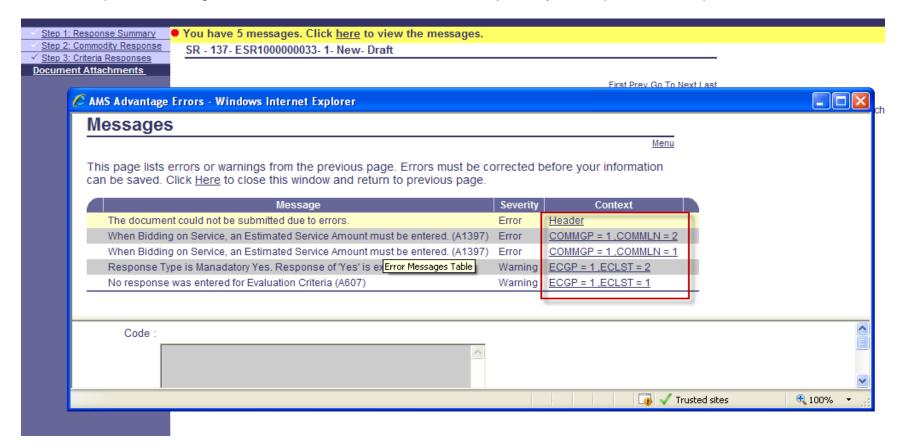
If you are finished entering your response, click the "Submit" link at the bottom of the page.



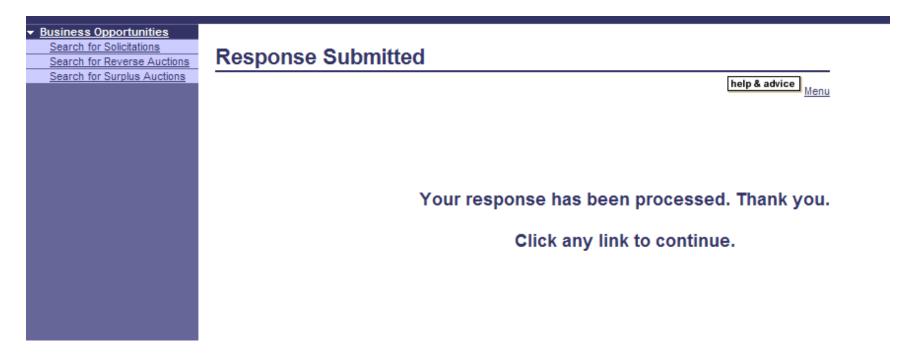
When you submit your response you will see a verification page that acknowledges the response is submitted. However, the system may generate messages that indicate there is an error in the response. Click on the yellow bar at the top of the screen, as shown below, to view your messages.



Click on a specific message, as shown below, to be directed to the part of your response that requires attention.



A submitted response with no errors will generate a verification page as shown below. If you do not receive this page after clicking submit, your response has not been received by the City of Cincinnati. Please read the previous page about submission errors that may prevent your bid from being received.



#### **Tracking Your Bids**

The "My Bids" link is the fastest way to find and view all of the solicitation responses you are working on or have submitted. You can see the link on the Vendor Self Service home page or in the top border of the screen.

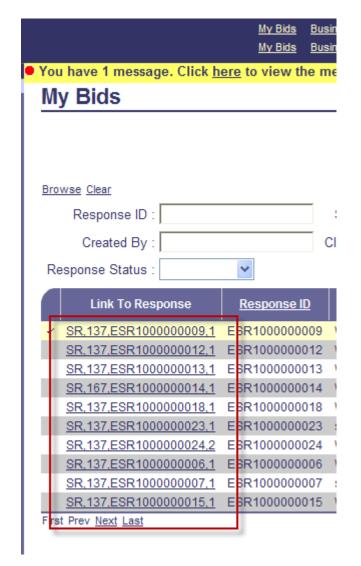
My Bids Business Opportunities Account Maintenance Forms and Additional Information

#### Welcome to the City of Cincinnati Vendor Self Service System

This site is divided into the following areas:

- . Business Opportunities Allows you to search the current opportunities available for competitive bids.
- My Bids You may view, edit, or check the status of bids you have submitted. Bids must be submitted before the closing date.
- . Account Maintenance Gives you the opportunity to maintain your account information.
- Forms and Additional Information Provides Department Listings, Bulletin Board View, and Forms that are available for view and download online.

The links at the top will allow you to move between the main areas of our system.



#### **Response Status**

Once you have clicked the "My Bids" link, you will be able to view all of the solicitation responses you are working on or have submitted.

The list of solicitation responses will show the response status of each one as either a "Draft," "Accepted," or "Rejected" response.

Drafts are responses that have been started and saved, but have not yet been finished.

Accepted responses have been finished and submitted by the closing date.

Rejected responses include bids that have not been successfully submitted by the closing date or bids that have been submitted without all of the required criteria responses entered.

#### <u>Status</u>

Additionally, the list will show the solicitation status of each as "Open," "Closed," or "Awarded."

"Open" solicitations have not yet reached their closing date. "Open" solicitations can be edited, even if the response has already been accepted.

"Closed" solicitations have reached their closing date and cannot be edited.

"Awarded" solicitations have closed and been awarded.

#### **Maintaining Your Account**

The "Account Maintenance" link is where you will update changing information about your company or contact person(s). You can see the link on the Vendor Self Service home page or in the top border of the screen.

#### Welcome to the City of Cincinnati Vendor Self Service System

This site is divided into the following areas:

- Business Opportunities Allows you to search the current opportunities available for competitive bids.
- My Bids You may view, edit, or check the status of bids you have submitted. Bids must be submitted before the closing date.
- Account Maintenance Gives you the opportunity to maintain your account information.
- Forms and Additional Information Provides Department Listings, Bulletin Board View, and Forms that are available for view and download online.

The links at the top will allow you to move between the main areas of our system.

Clicking the "Account Maintenance" link will bring you to the page shown below. Simply click on the information title that you are updating and fill out the fields that appear. You can enter into any section and leave without making changes by clicking "Cancel," so explore the section regularly to keep your company's account up to date.

# Account Maintenance Headquarters Information Master Addresses Contacts Location Information Address Information W-9 Information Business Types Service Areas Commodities User Information Location Users

#### **Account Maintenance**

help & advice

This section will allow you to maintain the information about your account. Please update your information as your operation changes.

- Headquarters Information This section allows you to view and edit information about the Headquarters of your location. You may update location verification security and the Headquarters web address.
- <u>Master Addresses</u> This section allows you to view and edit street address information. Master Addresses may be shared among locations that share the same Headquarters Account.
- <u>Contacts</u> This section allows you to view and edit contact information. Contacts may be shared among locations that share the same Headquarters Account.
- <u>Location Information</u> This section allows you to view and edit more specific information related to your location such
  as Legal Name, Organization Type, Classification, EFT Information, and Discount Terms.
- Address Information This section allows you to view and edit which addresses are listed to receive orders, payments, or bills for your location. You may set the Active To and From dates to be associated with an address, as well as indicate additional notes and information. Street Address and Contact information must be edited on the Master Address and Contact tabs, respectively.
- W-9 Information This section allows you to view and edit information related to your W-9 form, such as TIN, TIN Type, and Name, as well as the Address to which 1099 Forms will be sent.
- Business Types This section allows you to view and edit the business types that describe your organization.
- . Service Areas This section allows you to view and edit the geographical area(s) that your business serves.
- . Commodities This section allows you to view and edit the commodities that your company offers.
- <u>User Information</u> This section allows you to view and edit your VSS User ID, password, user contact and security information
- Location Users This section allows you to view and edit the list of users who are assigned to this location.

#### **Making Connections**

The "Forms and Additional Information" link is the place to find and communicate with other potential bidders. You can see the link on the Vendor Self Service home page or in the top border of the screen.

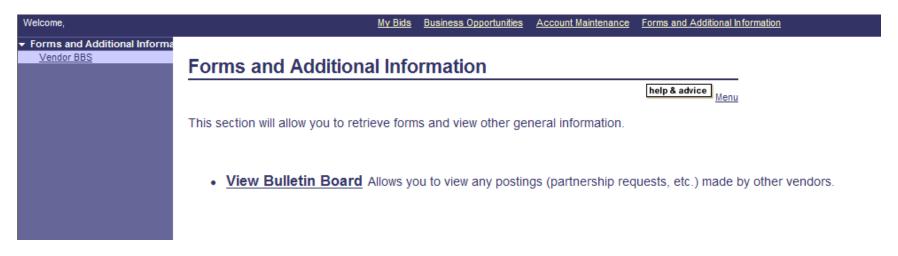
#### Welcome to the City of Cincinnati Vendor Self Service System

This site is divided into the following areas:

- . Business Opportunities Allows you to search the current opportunities available for competitive bids.
- My Bids You may view, edit, or check the status of bids you have submitted. Bids must be submitted before the closing date
- . Account Maintenance Gives you the opportunity to maintain your account information.
- Forms and Additional Information Provides Department Listings, Bulletin Board View, and Forms that are available for view and download online.

The links at the top will allow you to move between the main areas of our system.

Begin by clicking the "View Bulletin Board" link.



The bulletin board allows you to post communications to other bidders. \*If you are submitting questions for a buyer, see the "Questions and Answers" link on page 7 of the manual.

#### Vendor BBS help & advice Search through the messages posted by our vendors. Browse Clear Contact Name : Solicitation Vendor Name: Date Contact Contact Solicitation Message Contact Name Vendor Name Date Method Information Where would I locate the plan holders list? The Ohio Pavement Systems Phone ITB 137 091C909086 10/26/2009 contractors that Tom requested bid packages for project 091C909086? Can the planholders list be made available Tyler Schoborg Evers Welding Phone ITB 137 101C909030 06/03/2010 online? Thanks.

First Prev Next Last

When you have ended your visit to the VSS site, please remember to Logout using the link in the upper right corner.

